REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending. Claims 1-14 and 16-21 are amended for clarity.

Entry of the amendments to claims 1-14 and 16-21 is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: a) place the application in condition for allowance (for all the reasons discussed herein); b) do not raise any new issues requiring further search or consideration; and c) place the application in better form for appeal (if necessary). Accordingly, entry is proper under 37 CFR §1.116.

Applicants appreciates the courtesies extended to applicants' representative, Mr. Paul Tsou, during the September 5 personal interview. The substance of the personal interview is incorporated in the remarks below.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-7, and 15-21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,950,847 (Wolff) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,761,496 (Hattori); and claims 8-14 over Wolff in view of Hattori and further in view of the Background of the Application. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that Wolff "essentially ... is a retrieval system." (See Office Action, page 20, line 16.) The Office Action arrives at this conclusion because Wolff discloses an up-to-date database of available services and for responding to user service requests by distributing services at the client systems. However, as discussed during the interview, Wolff explicitly disclosed that the service provider system does not retrieve information over a network based on client service requests. Wolff disclosed that service providers

> acts to discover each service manager linked to the network 132 through which it desires to **offer** services and to **register** with each. In one embodiment, registration includes transferring a service proxy of the implemented service 140, 152 to the service manager 160 and may include obtaining a lease at the service manager 160 and maintaining the lease to remain listed as an available service.

(See Wolff, C6/L46-53, emphasis added.) Thus, instead of retrieving various service proxies (programs that implement the service) from service providers, Wolff disclosed that the service providers seek out service managers and then offer their services and registers with each of the service manager. There is no retrieval over the network involved.

As indicated above, service proxies are executable code that define and implement a service implementation provided by one of the service providers. (See Wolff, C5/L64-67.) Thus, a service manager receives service proxies from various service providers and saves the service proxies and selects from stored service proxies to satisfy client server's requests.

In view of the above, Wolff does not disclose or suggest retrieving service proxies. Rather, service providers register with the service manager and deposit their respective service proxies so that the service manager may select an appropriate service proxy to satisfy a client service request.

The Office Action further asserts that Wolff discloses modifying client requests or subscriptions citing disclosure in Wolff regarding matching and filtering available service proxies based on methods or functions included in the service's requests. (See Office Action, page 22, lines 10-16.) The Office Action cites Wolff at col. 8, lines 8-14. Wolff does not disclose modifying client requests or service subscriptions. The "matching" and "filtering" refers to Wolff processing service proxies to select a service proxy that best fits the client request or subscription. There is no modification of requests or subscriptions.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that Wolff does not disclose retrieval over the network much less modification of requests or subscriptions for retrieval. Rather, Wolff disclosed "matching may involve filtering the available service proxies based on methods or functions included in the service request." That is, the available service proxies are those service proxies that have been deposited by the service providers into the service manager. This is not a retrieval process. The service manager already has the service proxies in its storage.

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The "matching" and "filtering" referred to by the Office Action is a service manager process that examines the available service proxies and selects from the available service proxies those service proxies that it determines to best match the requirements in the service requests. Again, there is no retrieval; there is no modification of service requests; and there are no keywords nor retrieval expressions. Rather, Wolff discloses examining the available service proxies to determine which of these available service proxies best conform to the service requests.

In view of the above, the Office Action assertion that Wolff discloses essentially a retrieval system is incorrect. Wolff does not disclose a retrieval system that retrieves services over a network. Instead, information is registered with Wolff's system, and the service managers disclosed in Wolff selects from the registered service proxies to satisfy client service requests. Accordingly, Wolff does not disclose or suggest a service retrieval apparatus, as recited in claims 1, 8 and 15 and retrieving step that retrieves over a network a service as recited in claim 16.

Further, Wolff and Hattori do not disclose or suggest the judgment criteria set in advance, as recited in claims 1, 8 and 16. Wolff does not need a judgment criteria to evaluate a retrieval result because Wolff does not disclose any retrieval.

Hattori discloses:

> 1. Embodiment 1
> ...
> First the retrieval request input section 110 reads a retrieval request, including input keywords set up by the user and input keyword importance degrees, under control of the control section 100 when the user enters them at the keyboard input section 101.
>
> The retrieval management section 120 sets up retrieval parameters and, in addition, retrieves data on a trial and error basis via the **relation keyword generation section 121, retrieval expression generation section 122, relevance database management section 123**, relation data acquisition section 124, and database management section 125. That is, the retrieval management section 120 execute a sequence of operation repeatedly on a trial and error basis; it sets up retrieval parameters, **causes the relation keyword**

> **generation section 121 to generate relation keywords, causes**
> **the retrieval expression generation section 122 and the**
> **relevance database management section 123 to automatically**
> **generate a similarity retrieval expression satisfying user's**
> **retrieval needs,** and causes the database management section 125
> to execute retrieval. While performing a sequence of operation on a
> trial and error basis, the retrieval management section receives
> relation data via the relation data acquisition section 124 and stores
> it in the relevance database 126.
>
> More specifically, **the relation keyword generation section 121**
> **uses background knowledge, stored in the background**
> **knowledge storage sections 140, to generate relation keywords**
> **from the retrieval request input section 110 with retrieval**
> **parameters as thresholds. ...**

(Hattori, C9/L28 and C10/L1-28, emphasis added.) Here, Hattori discloses that the

user keyword search is performed by generating retrieval parameters, relation

keywords, and a retrieval expression, all of which are generated during the search,

thus not in advance, based on information stored in the background knowledge

storage, for example. Thus, Hattori does not disclose or suggest a judgment

criteria that are set in advance, as recited in claims 1, 8 and 16.

The specification discloses on page 26, line 15-page 27, line 12, for example, that the

judgment criteria may specify upper and lower limits of the number of services in the retrieval

result before a judgment result is returned. On the other hand, Hattori is directed to a general

keyword retrieval system that assists a user for searching a database by specifying keyword

and keyword importance degrees. Hattori does **not** disclose judgment criteria set in advance.

Thus, Hattori does not disclose the subject matter recited in claims 1, 8 and 16.

In view of the above, Wolff and Hattori individually would not have rendered obvious

the subject matter recited in claims 1, 8, 15 and 16. Claims 2-7, 9-14 and 17-21 depend from

claims 1, 8, 15 and 16. Accordingly, Wolff and Hattori individually would not have rendered

obvious the subject matter recited in claims 1-21. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-21

under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully solicited.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-21 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment:
 Request for Continued Examination

Date: September 6, 2006

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